

CREATION

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The one true Rock

Brian Cox, former rock musician, particle physicist and popular BBC science presenter was interviewed for the Sunday Telegraph of 20th February, under the headline, *'I'm not anti-religion, I'm anti-maniac'*. Who would these maniacs be? Take a guess.....

Described by the interviewer as having a 'dry and self deprecating sense of humour', and by the Daily Mail as a 'sex symbol', Cox clearly enjoys using profanity as many of his words had to be asterisked out, particularly when he was insulting Creationists. He has warm words for the Archbishop of Canterbury though. The Archbishop invited Cox to his house because he enjoyed Cox's popular 'Wonders of the Solar System' TV series. Earlier, he met the Dean of Guildford cathedral when sitting on a panel as an atheist and got on well with him, taking him to visit the Large Hadron Collider with which he is associated. Oddly, or perhaps not, the interviewer didn't ask any critical questions about this massively over-hyped and costly toy which broke soon after being switched on and has so far delivered little or nothing apart from employment for the likes of Brian Cox and others who dream

of finding evidence for a non-theistic origin of the universe.

Cox, who with his band D:Ream recorded the song *'Things can only get better'* which the Labour party used as their 1997 election theme, takes a 'practical' view of religion. He is glad to be chummy with religious leaders as long as they back off and bow down before the demands of materialism. He said of the Archbishop of Canterbury *'Rowan Williams is a very thoughtful man. If you want to move society forward in a more rational (i.e. materialistic-SH) direction, religious leaders can be useful because they share that view.....if you believe that the world was created 6,000 years ago, as the Creationists do, then you are an idiot.'*

It is instructive to note Cox use the terms *'useful'* and *'idiot'* of Christians in the same paragraph. Soviet revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin is said to have coined the term *'useful idiot'* for those in the West who were willing to be deceived about communism - and deceive others - rather than accept the uncomfortable realities about the merciless power that confronted them and planned their ruin. Lenin also said *'when the time comes to hang the capitalists, they will sell us the rope.'*

We wish Professor Cox well, despite his condescending attitude, profane language and smug grin, and hope that he will learn to give glory to the Maker of the wonders of the solar system, who also made him. The heavens are telling the glory of God (Psalm 19). Cox is arguably less to blame for his refusal to give glory to his Creator than are the church leaders whose fear of man and desire to escape criticism causes them to back down for fear of being thought 'irrelevant' or 'out of touch'. Have such leaders read the creed used in the Communion service which begins *'We believe in God, the father almighty, maker of heaven and earth'...*?

Cox is not alone in the strategy of being nice to Christians who accept evolution and nasty about those who don't. In Richard Dawkins' latest polemic 'The Greatest Show on Earth', in which he made the outrageous and unscientific claim that the evidence for evolution is at least as good as the evidence for the Nazi race holocaust, he asserts that *'all reputable theologians'* accept evolution, while viciously attacking Darwin dissenters. An interesting use of the word *'reputable'* since in his previous book he called all theists deluded. He has compared the resurrection of The Lord Jesus with the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, and called on Oxford university to close its department of theology. How can you be reputable if you are an ignorant and deluded peddler of fairy tales? Obviously Dawkins and his fellow workers despise all theologians, but are careful to flatter the tame ones when it suits them. The message is cleverly changed according to the target audience, but the goal remains the same - the steady undermining and eventual elimination of Christianity from Britain.

What will it take to make the church leaders of Britain wake up to the goals and strategies of the enemies of the Gospel? Whether they are being nice or nasty, they are working steadily to extinguish Christianity from our nation. When will our leaders realise how much ground has already been lost? If the opponents of Christ perceive our doctrine and preaching as no threat to their progress, may we ask whether or not we are holding to the doctrine of Christ? Beware when all men speak well of you, for the fear of man brings a snare; friendship with the world is enmity with God. It is long past time for believers to open their eyes and ears, take a stand for truth and be prepared to be called names for the sake of The Name.

Stephen Hayes

Adam's Fall

Peter Harrison makes some interesting comments in his book *The Fall of Man and the Foundations of Science* (2007, CUP) about a terracotta statue of Adam that once had a place in the Natural History Museum in London. Originally it was located on a prominent gable overlooking the exhibition. Even though it survived WWII it was later removed (p.245). Also moved is the statue of Richard Owen that has been shifted to a side aisle and been replaced by one of Charles Darwin on the staircase in the main entrance hall. Harrison in his book points out that the scientific enterprise of experiment, testing and weighing of evidence was originally conceived by Francis Bacon and the Royal Society as a way of overcoming the impact that Adam's Fall had upon the human mental capacity. The Fall of Adam and Eve



Francis Bacon, father of the scientific method.
Image in the public domain.

was believed in the early modern period to have left the capacity for knowledge imperfect due to sin (the noetic effect of sin). How times change with the arrogance of man throwing aside the wisdom of God's revelation and sound doctrine and all vestiges of the Christian foundations of science steadily being concealed from view.

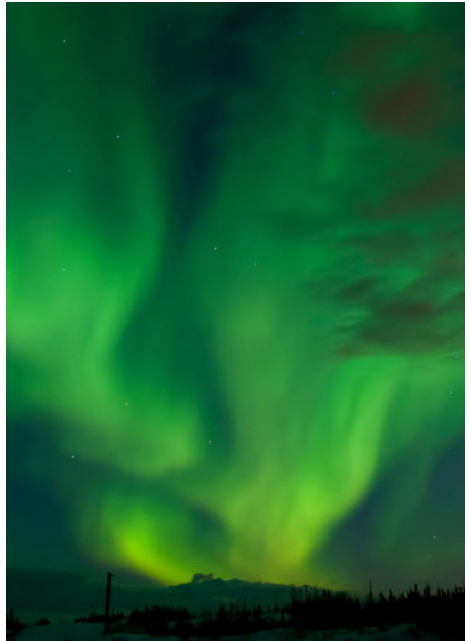
AS

Consider the sun...

The Earth lies about 93 million miles from the Sun, our nearest and most important star. We receive from the Sun the necessary heat to keep us alive, and thankfully most of the Earth is within hospitable limits due to the water vapour in

the atmosphere that allows only the right amount of heat through.

But the Sun gives off some other dangerous things. Protons and electrons are emitted from the Sun and can reach 6/10ths the speed of light as they are accelerated by the Sun's magnetic field towards the Earth. Thankfully these are streamed away by the Earth's magnetic field. Powerful X-rays are also given off by the Sun. As the magnetic fields in association with sun-spots rotate, twist and finally break sudden high level bursts of X-rays can be sent towards the Earth. But these powerful X-rays are absorbed by the Earth's thick atmosphere. As the magnetic fields in the sun-spots break solar flares are also produced (called Coronal Mass Ejections), but again the full force of these plasma clouds and magnetic



The aurora borealis in Canada - the result of particles from the sun colliding with oxygen and nitrogen atoms in the Earth's atmosphere. Image: D. Dyet, www.rgbstock.com

shock waves are turned away from the Earth, although occasionally such flares enhance the wonderfully beautiful aurora borealis. We are both protected from the full force of the Sun and given a sense of wonder at the same time by our Creator.

AS

Fungi and ants

In the news on The Guardian online recently (accessed 02 March 2011) has been *Ophiocordyceps*, the bizarre fungus that attacks and modifies the behaviour of ants.

Ants become infected with the fungus when spores land on them from above, or when they encounter them on the forest floor. Once attached, the spores use enzymes to get inside the ant's body where the fungus begins to grow. Within a week or so, chemicals released by the fungus cause the ant to wander up from the forest floor and onto a plant where it bites onto a leaf vein or other vegetation moments before it dies. Many ants thereby come to be in places where the conditions are perfect for fungal growth. Once the ant has died, the fungus slowly sprouts from its head and grows a pod of spores which are fired onto the forest floor at night to infect other ants.

The news story follows on from an earlier report (The Guardian online, 18 August 2010) on the research of a team of scientists led by David Hughes of Harvard University. They had noticed that ants infected with the fungus *Ophiocordyceps unilateralis* bit into leaves with so much force that they left a lasting mark. The holes created by their mandibles either side

of the leaf vein were bordered by scar tissue, producing an unmistakable dumb-bell shape.

The team realized that a fossil leaf from the Messel pit, near Darmstadt in Germany, showed the same characteristic dumb-bell marking. Fossils from this pit are supposedly 48 million years old, and consequently the team concluded that "parasitic fungi evolved the ability to control the creatures they infect in the distant past, even before the rise of the Himalayas". But is this really what the evidence shows? Rather, doesn't it indicate that the fungi are operating in just the same way now as they were then – there has been no evolution at all. Perhaps, then, the fungi were designed from the very beginning with the capability for this strange lifestyle in a fallen world.

RC

Facts and factoids

According to the Daily Telegraph online (accessed 06 March 2011), Dr Richard Pike, the chief executive of the Royal Society of Chemistry, has demanded that children should be taught that Darwin's theory of evolution is a fact rather than a theory. He is reported as saying that, "A wider understanding of the scientific basis of our existence will position all of us to address more effectively the major issues facing our planet. In this there is no role for 'creationism' or 'intelligent design', and religious education must recognise the allegorical nature of much of its source material." The extraordinary ability of a chemistry executive to enlighten us all on the nature of the source of much of the

Bible is remarkable; one quite wonders if he has missed a vocation in theology. On the other hand, maybe he would find that paying more attention to a wider understanding of when something is established as a fact and when it is not would be rather more helpful.

RC

Cuttings & Comments from **New Scientist** by Dr David Rosevear

8 January 2011, p.11 In the beginning was naked genetic material...

“One of the great transitions in the history of life took shape when naked genetic material clothed itself and protocells were born. But try to recreate this moment and you quickly hit a stumbling block. A lipid-coated protocell doesn’t have the machinery to easily divide in two when the genetic material replicates.”

Another stumbling block is that genetic material (DNA, RNA) is inherently unstable, and in the absence of repair mechanisms in the cell, would lose its information. The formation of these nucleic acids requires particular proteins to hold the configuration. Otherwise the linkage of the phosphate groups across the sugars would not give a useful replicating molecule. Moreover, how is the information made that rides upon the DNA?

“However, there is another challenge to overcome: you need access to a high concentration of chemical building blocks to generate the crowded cluster around the heredity carrier.”

There is so much complexity to the simplest of self-replicating cells that common sense tells one that chance cannot pull the rabbit out of the hat. And if any part is missing, the cell cannot function. Yet if there is no Creator, the search for the impossible must continue.

8 January p.41 Look beyond the cuddly façade

Here is a review of the book *Dog, Inc: The uncanny inside story of cloning man’s best friend*, by John Woestendiek.

Snuppy, the first dog clone had been made by geneticist Woo Suk Hwang in Seoul University, South Korea, at about the time Mr Woo had been fired for his false claim to have cloned a human embryo. **“Given his dogged determination and dubious ethics, not to mention his self-destructive pride, Hwang is an apt father figure for dog cloning.”** ‘Dogged’, because it takes many, many failed trials to provide one successful clone.

The book claims that this cloning has brought us a step closer to human cloning by advancing its social acceptance.

“The dogs that provided the eggs and DNA to produce Snuppy were mostly drawn from the vast population of ‘farm mutts’ that supply restaurants with dog meat.”

15 January p.26 Opinion Letters – Early Birds

NS reader Stephen King writes in response to an article on the supposed transition from dinosaurs to birds: **“I was also surprised that Xu used the phrase ‘the first feathers probably evolved for display’.** Evolutionists should avoid such teleological language, which risks confusing evolution with Kiplingesque just so stories.”



The scaly skin of a reptile is perfectly designed for its way of life. Any incipient change of the scales towards becoming feathers would be selected against, as the reptile would be less well protected.
Image: D. Kaszczyszyn, www.sxc.hu

Unlike Creation, evolution does not set out purposely to make something useful. In fact, if changes began to be made with a view to making, say, wings from scales, natural selection will eliminate the nascent change.

22 January p.16 Roman empire succumbed to wild shifts in climate

“Büntgen [a Swiss researcher] reconstructed temperatures and rainfall in western Europe over the last 2500 years from nearly 9000 samples of oak, pine and larch. This showed that from AD 250 to 550 the climate flipped each decade from dry and cool to warm and wet. Such quick flips are disruptive, says Büntgen, because they harm farming but don’t allow people to adapt. Indeed, the period coincided with political upheaval and waves of human migration. By AD 500, the western Roman empire had fallen. The relatively stable medieval society that followed it benefited from less variable climatic conditions.” There is no evidence that the

Romans levied a carbon tax to alleviate the situation.

22 January p.42 Waking the dead

Recently scientists have been detecting soft organic material in rocky fossils - material that shouldn’t still survive after millions of years. Groups have reported finding proteins and blood vessels inside dinosaur bones, and traces of pigments in **“108-million-year-old feathers”**. This, they say, is due to rapid burial under anoxic conditions, as in the Burgess shale. The ‘mummy’ of a duck-billed dinosaur has been preserved in great detail when the thick-skinned animal **“was buried quickly in fine river-bed sands, capturing impressions of the skin before the tissue decays”**. They allege that *Archaeopteryx* with its finely etched feather impressions was fossilised quickly in lime at the bottom of a stagnant lagoon.

DNA that is unstable outside living organisms has been found in mammoths, the bones of Neanderthals and extinct cave bears. In the mid-nineties, Mary Schweitzer’s team dissolved away the calcium of the **“68-million-year-old”** fossilised bone of a *T-rex* dinosaur and they were left with flexible blood vessels. The team had been alerted because the fossilised femur was too heavy to be removed from its burial site by helicopter, so they had to break it. To their surprise the bone was hollow. Samples of the interior were taken for analysis. Fragments of the protein collagen were also found. In 2009 the same team isolated haemoglobin, elastin and laminin, as well as what looks like blood cells from an **“80-million-year-old”** dinosaur leg. Others have now reported similar findings.

It is the dating that is wildly out with these results. The anoxic sealing occurred only

some 4,000 years ago in a worldwide flood in the days of Noah.

29 January p.32 The life factory

With the search for the origin of life stalled, perhaps life started out as something completely different, such as minerals in hot rocks. **“What’s more, neither Miller and Urey nor more recent experimenters managed to make anything beyond a few simple and distinctly lifeless amino acids. Attempts to meld these amino acids into sophisticated proteins, or to create long, complex molecules such as DNA and RNA – the sort of components that underlie even the simplest single-celled life forms – just result in a tarry mess... the complexity even of simple life cannot spring out of nothing.”** It is refreshing to see such admissions stated so honestly and clearly by evolutionists. When will these truths reach the school textbooks?

With suggestions such as metal oxide precursors for the supposed origin of life becoming more and more desperate, it seems odd that researchers pour scorn upon the idea that a living God spoke life into existence in all its complexity and diversity. After they have given up on making reproducing chemicals from metal oxides and the like, they still will not have begun to fathom out how one form of life could evolve into a different kind.

29 January p.36 The Cassandra factor

Cassandra, soothsaying daughter of the king of ancient Troy, foresaw and foretold the fall of her city. The problem was that nobody heeded her message of doom. Today disaster looms ever larger on our world’s horizon. **“Climate change, ecosystem crunches, market crashes, stability seems a fragile and transitory state, threatening at any point to tip into**

uncertainty and chaos... the collapse of fisheries, water supply problems, desertification, or species invasions... Early warnings could save a lot of money and a lot of human sufferings.

“Even if we were to see incontrovertible signs [of imminent catastrophe] in time, that does not necessarily mean we will be able to agree on the right actions... human-collective action problems bedevil effective action.”

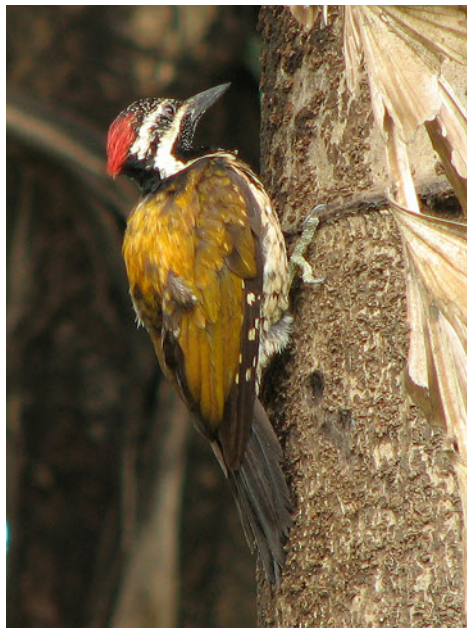
Scripture warns us in many places, such as Acts 17, that a time of divine judgment is surely coming. God now commands all men everywhere to repent: because He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He has ordained: whereof He has given assurance to all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead. Whoever believes in Christ shall have everlasting life (John 3).

5 February p.21 Woodpecker’s head inspires shock absorbers

“A woodpecker’s head experiences decelerations of 1200g as it drums on a tree up to 22 times per second. Humans are often left concussed if they experience 80 to 100g, so how the woodpecker avoids brain damage was unclear.”

Scientists have found four structures that absorb mechanical shock in the bird: **“a hard-but-elastic beak; a sinewy and springy tongue-supporting hyoid bone; an area of spongy bone in the skull; and little space between the skull and the brain for cerebrospinal fluid, which transmits vibrations.”**

With a view to safely retrieving flight recorder data from a crashed plane, they built artificial analogues of these four features and achieved success against shocks of 60,000g.



Woodpeckers are yet another example of irreducible complexity, requiring an integrated set of specialized features to make their lifestyle possible. Image: K. Rayker, www.rgbstock.com

The Designer of the woodpecker's head has a prior claim to this multi-component system. All four parts are needed to stop Woody from beating its brains out.

5 February p.26 Discriminating the truth
"Religious faith must not be used as an excuse for scientific ignorance, says [atheist] Lawrence M. Krauss."

Astrophysicist Martin Gaskell sued his Kentucky university for passing over him for promotion, **"despite him being the best candidate"**. He claimed it was because of his Christian faith. They settled out of court.

"In the notes for a lecture he gave at the university in 1997, Gaskell claimed, in clear disagreement with scientific facts, that evolution has 'significant scientific problems' and includes 'unwarranted

atheistic assumptions and extrapolations'. This suggests a lack of understanding of the nature of scientific theory in general, and evolution in particular.

"The US Constitution rightly allows people to believe what they want, even if others think they are wrong. However, it does not require universities to promote ignorance."

[On a personal note, your present *NS* reviewer was never denied promotion in more than two decades, despite freely criticising evolution theory in his graduate chemistry lectures. I guess if he had been teaching astrophysics, or biology or geology, there might have been problems. Students of these subjects cannot learn the truth by this kind of discrimination.]

5 January Instant Expert 8 – Dark Matter

This eight-page insert says that **"it is an embarrassing time to be a cosmologist"**. A couple of decades ago, they thought they knew what the universe was made of. Now they think that what we see is only 20 per cent of what is out there. The majority is dark matter and dark energy, invisible to telescopes. **"The individual galaxies were zipping round far too rapidly for their gravity to keep them bound together in a cluster. By rights, they should have been flying off in different directions."** Hence the theoretical need for more mass/gravity from an unseen source, cold dark matter. An even more mysterious substance, dark energy, can be inferred from the Cosmic Microwave Background. This is said to be a force that seems to be causing our universe to expand ever faster. Observations seem to have ruled out neutron stars or white dwarfs – 'Massive Astrophysical Compact Halo Objects', or MACHOs – from being the dark stuff. **"So**

most cosmologists now think instead that we are submerged in a sea of dark matter – a gas of ‘Weakly Interacting Massive Particles’ or WIMPs – that pervade the entire volume of our galaxy, including our solar system.”

“Proposals for dark matter’s identity range from heavy, neutrino-like particles, to ultra-light and cold species of matter known as axions, to truly bizarre possibilities such as particles that are moving through extra dimensions of space.” They have even invented a new class of theories that goes by the name of supersymmetry. Why not invisible superglue?

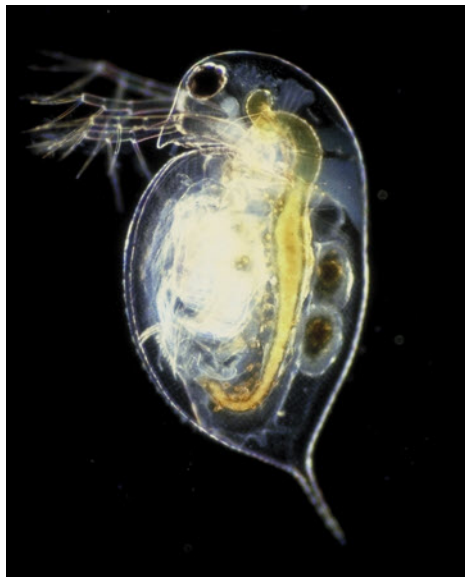
The search goes on in deep mines far from solar radiation, to deep space where the dark stuff might interact visibly with normal matter. Could it even be made by us at CERN’s Large Hadron Collider?

“Few problems have received more attention from physicists and astronomers in recent years than trying to discover what it is and how it works. So far, there are few concrete facts, just educated guesses... If no such signals appear in the coming decade, physicists are going to have to throw out much of what they think they know about dark matter and dream up new possibilities.”

Yes, an “embarrassing time” for those who substitute an unproven big bang theory with its billions of years for the simple statement that ‘in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth’ in just six days. In just a few thousand years, rapidly rotating galaxies are not going to disintegrate.

12 February p.7 Tiny flea, big genome

“It may be just 5 millimetres long, but the water flea packs in more genes than any species yet sequenced. With 30,907 genes, *Daphnia pulex* has at least 5000 more



Lateral view of *Daphnia pulex*. Image: P. Hebert, www.plosbiology.org/article/info:doi/10.1371/journal.pbio.0030219, under Creative Commons Attribution 2.5 licence.

than humans, many newly evolved to help the fleas combat climatic changes and pollutants.”

Since genome sequencing has only recently been developed, it is nonsense to claim that many genes are newly evolved. One would need to know the state of the genome before they evolved. Moreover, genes cannot evolve since random mutations would only bring a loss of genetic information, rendering such genes useless. Maybe the large number is due to a number of (created) alleles needed to cope with different possible environments. Never mind the sparrows; the Creator even cares about fleas!

12 February p.34 Evolution’s X factor

When paternal and maternal chromosomes combine to make an offspring, they overlap, break and recombine to shuffle the order of genes. Hence the child has a mix of

characteristics of mum and dad. With the possible exception of identical twins, no two siblings are alike. Having genetically diverse offspring increases the likelihood that at least some of them will survive in changing conditions.

However, this mechanism could never change one kind of creature into a different kind.

19 February p.5 The power of one brain

“In 2007, all the general computers in the world could together perform 6.4×10^{18} instructions per second. That roughly equals the number of nerve impulses produced by one human brain each second.”

Nobody suggests that all these computer instructions could be produced by time and chance, yet our brains are supposed to have been evolved from some early primate. This is not science!

19 February p.34 Days of wonder

All of our bodies obey circadian rhythms and so do most creatures from algae and fungi to mammals. But there is more to waking up as it gets light than simply opening our eyes. Genes act on 20 proteins in humans over the 24 hour cycle, preparing us for sleep or bringing us round. Wake-up signals are transmitted to specialised nerves to **“prepare the body for the day ahead by arranging a shot of blood glucose from the liver followed by a surge in stress hormones such as cortisol and aldosterone”**. Neurons trigger increases in muscle tone, blood pressure and metabolism as the body moves from the horizontal to the vertical. Monday mornings are more of a problem because over the weekend we allow ourselves a lie-in. More heart attacks occur on the first 3 days after the clocks go

forward in the spring and our body clocks adjust to our alarm clocks.

Come the evening, inhibitory proteins reach their peak concentrations, and turn down production of those proteins that help us wake up, and that have been so active during the day. Deep in the brain information is passed to the pineal gland which secretes melatonin. This hormone tells the cells and organs that it is night, and we feel tired.

It is the body clock that gives the feeling that a watched kettle never boils, and that the return journey is shorter than an unfamiliar outward trip.

“Biological clocks tick in every cell of my body but the master clock that orchestrates them sits in the suprachiasmatic nuclei (SCN) deep within my brain, near where my optic nerves cross.” And all this complex machinery is in the brains of even the dumbest of us. The Creator put it there. As I read somewhere: ‘He gives to His beloved sleep’. Sadly, not everyone seems to know that simple fact. For instance, this article includes a possible explanation of why we yawn. **“Another suggestion is that baring teeth during a yawn evolved as a way of protection from predators intent on ambushing a drowsy foe.”** More likely, a yawn draws in extra oxygen to feed a brain that is trying to close us down for the night.

26 February p.5 Lase that nuke

This paragraph speaks of the problem of safely storing nuclear waste for a long time. **“Although there is currently no way to reduce the half-life of high volumes of radioactive waste, huge lasers, have reduced the half-lives of specks of such material.”**

The period of the world-wide flood in the days of Noah was a time of extremely high

energy, both on earth and probably cosmically. If radioactive elements decayed much more rapidly during that year, these materials would now appear to be much older than the historical age of the Creation.

26 February p.5 Here come the cones

“Conifers probably owe their tough cones to the appearance of sauropods. The long-necked dinosaurs could reach the highest branches, leading the conifers to innovate to protect their seeds.”

This is a typical Just So story. Plants are actually designed to encourage seed dispersal by all possible means. Seeds of some trees will not germinate until they have passed through the digestive system of some creature.



If conifers had such a pressing need to protect their seeds that they developed cones, then how is it that some produce berries instead, such as yew or the juniper figured above? It makes much more sense to believe that they were designed precisely as their Creator wished. Image: Wikipedia, under GNU Free Documentation License, Version 1.2.

26 February p.24 Sticky feet send insect-bot climbing up the walls

Roboticians have been mimicking the feet of insects in their attempts to design a robot that can climb vertical smooth surfaces. Some robots have been made to squirt sticky liquid through their feet, while some copy the gecko in using nanotubes of

carbon on their feet in place of the geckos' myriad tiny hairs.

Surely it is reasonable to suppose that the creatures being mimicked were themselves designed. Time cannot produce a hairy foot and if insects relied on chance to climb walls they would come to a sticky end.

5 March p.32 Dark matter belief

On the 'Letters' page a Norwegian writes in response to the Instant Expert article of 5 February (see above): **“One could equally well argue that all the evidence points to the conclusion that dark matter does not exist. After decades of intensive searching, not one dark matter particle has been observed, and even the Large Hadron Collider at CERN in Switzerland has so far provided no indication of its existence. To me, the most plausible conclusion, based on the experimental evidence, is that dark matter does not exist. That many people believe in the stuff does not make it scientific.”**

Well done, *NS*, for publishing this opinion!

5 March Instant Expert 9 - Mass Extinctions

Bristol University professor Michael J Benton believes that, as well as the myriad individual extinctions (such as the Dodo in modern times) there have been several mass extinctions over geological time, when large proportions of species were wiped out by catastrophes. The first was said to be more or less at the bottom of the fossil record. The dinosaurs apparently died out over a period of 165 million years. We did not expect him to suggest one big cataclysm of a year's duration covering the globe with water.

“The mindset can be traced back to Charles Lyell, who in the 1830s argued that the foundation of sane geology was

uniformitarianism. This holds that ‘the present is the key to the past’: all geological phenomena can be explained by processes we see today, extrapolated over enormous periods of time.”

Only in the last half-century have ideas such as catastrophic asteroid impacts with their tell-tale iridium layers gained currency. It is thought that massive volcanic activity was responsible for the ‘end-Permian extinction’. The Siberian Traps were formed when great rifts in the earth’s crust spread huge areas with basalt lava.

However, since rates of sedimentation, erosion, fossilisation, ice layers, etc. can be demonstrated to have occurred rapidly, these millions of years have never existed. The Bible, as well as very many folk stories, tells of the Creator judging the earth by means of a global flood, with the ‘fountains of the deep’ possibly being volcanic

activity on a heroic scale. This flood resulted in massive geological changes and the death of all people and animals not on the Ark. Their fossils, sorted by density and habitat, have been interpreted as representing different epochs. The climate change following this cataclysm meant that many large animals such as dinosaurs that had survived on the Ark later became extinct. Mammoths and woolly rhinos that had selected alleles for long hairy coats to survive the Ice Age, died out as things warmed up. The meteor activity was also probably a feature of the flood.

Fifty years ago this year, J C Whitcomb Jr and Henry M Morris published their landmark book, *The Genesis Flood*. This gave Christians scientific and biblical explanations, so that it became easier to be a ‘6-Day creationist’. Most of their arguments have stood the test of time. A two-volume update has just been produced by Dr Andrew Snelling (see ICR’s website.)



A woolly mammoth – one of a number of species of animals that died out following the end of the Ice Age. Image: M. Zacharzewski, www.rgbstock.com

12 March p.4 Go get rocks from Mars...with aliens inside

Scientists claimed this week that a photo of a meteorite showed it contained fragments of fossilised bacteria. Others dispute the claim, which is based on evidence from scanning electron microscopy – **“The first thing you learn when you do electron microscopy is that it’s easy to see anything you are looking for – if you have a good search image, you can find it”, she says. ‘I think those squiggles are just places in the rock where the minerals happened to arrange themselves in a squiggle shape. Minerals readily grow into fibres.’”**

Readers may recall a similar claim made for a meteorite found in the Antarctic a few years ago. Evidence for extra-terrestrial life

is still entirely missing. It hasn't evolved elsewhere and it didn't evolve here on earth.

12 March p.6 Key to humanity is in missing DNA

How does human DNA differ from chimps? **“The key changes are not in bits of DNA that humans acquired as they evolved – extra genes that we have but chimps and other animals do not – but in chunks of DNA that we lost. What’s more, the chunks in question are not even genes at all, but sequences of DNA that lie in between genes and act as switches, orchestrating when and where specific genes are turned on and off through the course of an animal’s development.**

So protein-coding genes are not affected, which explains why the genes of chimps and men are so very similar. It is the DNA switches in between the genes that are fewer in humans – the parts that used to be known as ‘Junk’ DNA.

Of the 510 differences identified, two have been studied. One involves hormone production, while the other stifles growth of brain tissue. This **“suppresses the development of brain regions which in humans are involved in higher cognitive functions like conscious thought and language.”** If the switch were lost completely, the brain cells would grow without restraint, rather than simply allowing our brains to be larger.

Is this evidence of evolution? The system of regulation, with DNA switches that control growth is clearly a design feature rather than natural selection acting upon mutations. Evolutionary progress brought about by losing switching mechanisms does seem strange.



Fossilised fully articulated crinoids - showing they were buried very rapidly. Image: CSM

12 March p.14 A world unchanged since the Mesozoic

A population of crinoids (sea lilies) has been found in the seas around Antarctica. **“Although the community appears to be relatively young, the creatures seem so similar to their Mesozoic ancestors that the way they feed and position themselves to form a community is probably unchanged”.**

No evolution there, then.

A feature of crinoid fossils is that after death the soft parts holding the ossicles together rot and the bones fall apart. Yet in the Mesozoic layers (perhaps some 4,500 years ago) their fossils are found articulated and complete. They were buried alive catastrophically.

19 March p.34 The mathematics of being nice

Harvard maths professor Martin Nowak, in this *NS* interview, has concluded that the secret of humanity's success is the ability to cooperate. He asks why natural selection favours helping others at one's own expense. He has come up with ways in which cooperation gives us an edge:-

If I help you now, you may help me later.

Someone else may see me helping you and conclude that I am a helpful person, and help me later.

Cooperation among neighbours helps group survival, both in humans and bacteria, animals and plants.

Kin selection occurs when you help a close relative.

“Now, for the first time, we can see these ideas in terms of mathematics. Who would have thought that you could prove mathematically that, in a world where everybody is out for himself, the winning strategy is to be forgiving, and that those who cannot forgive can never win?”

Nowak, a theistic evolutionist, admits that **“the world's religions hit on these ideas first”**. He is right – In Luke 6:38 the Creator tells us: “Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

By the way, isn't it heartening to hear the media marking the 400th anniversary of the King James Version of the Bible? It helps to take the bad taste of the 150th anniversary in 2009 of another book out of one's mouth!

19 March p.38 Modern makeover

Preserved human skeletons and mummified cadavers in the University of Zurich are being used to study how our bodies have changed over the millennia. The modern western lifestyle has changed our waistline, height and musculature as labour-saving devices and transport have taken the strain. These are claimed as micro-evolutionary change, though it is admitted that they might be reversed by a return to a bygone way of life. With smaller muscles comes thinner bones to anchor the muscles, and this can be tracked in recent changes in bones. The past century has seen an increasing exposure of women to the hormone oestrogen, leading to an increased susceptibility to breast cancer, and a thickening of the skull just above the eyes, as shown by scans.

“Discovering how those adaptations are making us more vulnerable to certain diseases and less so to others is an important facet of evolutionary or Darwinian medicine, an emerging speciality that views health and disease through the lens of evolutionary theory. Last October the university opened a Centre for Evolutionary Medicine...”

However, an American doctor has said: **“Conventional medicine has a long record of successes. Evolutionary medicine hasn't proven that it has any real value.”** Best not to fall sick anywhere near Zurich, then!

19 March p.54 Existence is useless

This is a review of the book *On Being* by Oxford Chemistry Professor Peter Atkins.

“As might be expected of a loud-voiced atheist, Atkins misses no opportunity to take a swipe at religious ideas on being. This is for entertainment's sake, really; few of his readers will need persuading of the silliness of end-times myths or the

lack of evidence for any kind of afterlife or eternal soul.”

In place of the Christian’s joyful anticipation of being changed into the image of Jesus Christ at His Coming, the pitiable prof. says **“Deep down we, like everything, are driven by purposeless decay”**. This second law of thermodynamics has caused the whole Creation to groan and travail until now. However, now is Christ risen from the dead and become the first-fruits of them that slept. And as we have borne the image of the earthy Adam, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly, Christ Himself.

26 March p.40 Total reboot

“If we took everything we’ve learned and rebuilt civilisation from scratch, what would that world look like?”

The article considers the optimal way to design cities, change the money system, decimalise time, remake religion and so on.

“We have seven days a week because the Babylonians named one for each planet they knew... Still, at least the Babylonians avoided the colossal blooper of making a week last 10 days. Aren’t weekends already too far apart?”

There you were thinking that the universal 7-day week had to do with the Creator taking 6 days to make everything, followed by a rest day. While He was here He explained that the Sabbath was made for man, because a day off a week is the most satisfactory way to live.

The section **“Choosing a religion”** also ignored the One we should worship. Religion **“is good for some things: religious people are happier and healthier, and religion offers community. Besides, secularism has passed its zenith...”** The piece recognises four basic flavours of religion. There are the rituals of incense, bells and choral music of

Catholicism, healing and casting out demons of some evangelical Christians, mysticism of Buddhists and scholarly study of texts such as the Koran and Torah.

“A new world religion would have a harmonious blend of them all... Numerous festivals, holidays and rituals would keep followers hooked... The everyday rituals will focus on rhythmic dancing and chanting to stimulate the release of endorphins, which Robin Dunbar, also at Oxford, says are key to social cohesion. To keep people coming back, he also prescribes ‘some myths that break the laws of physics, but not too much’...” Robin Dunbar is the intellectual whose research led him to suggest that human speech developed from the desire of women to gossip, so I guess he knows what he is talking about.

“With many gods and great tolerance of idiosyncratic local practices, the new religion will be highly adaptable to the needs of different congregations without losing its unifying identity. It would promote ...the use of contraceptives ...environmental issues, philanthropy, pacifism and cooperation. Now what shall we call it? Uptopianity?”

There is a way which seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. Proverbs 14:12

Crossword Challenge

Readers may have noticed that unlike many magazines, the CSM Journal does not include a crossword puzzle. In this issue we would like to address this by offering the following challenge: you are invited to create a self-assembling crossword puzzle. The puzzle must assemble itself from a random jumble of

letters, numbers and grid squares (which may or may not be of the same size) and yet upon completion it must all work together perfectly and make rational sense. Your own intelligent input and design are not permitted. You can take as many millions of years as you like to complete this, if this helps. Oh, and of course, the answer to one of the clues must be “Richard Dawkins”. Sounds familiar? Hmm...

RC

Genesis Expo Update, April 2011

Yes, reliable news. The fire doors and emergency lighting are being installed. The electricity company has been paid in advance to put in a 3-phase supply and move the meter up from the damp basement to the exhibition floor. The pavement outside will be dug up to lay the cable. An electrician was commissioned to rewire the premises and carry out a PAT survey as requested by our insurers. Not only all this, but a studio has been asked to make new exhibit boards for the mezzanine floor. The difficult, unproductive winter has burst into spring with Phil 1:6 “He that has begun a good work ... will finish it”. Of course He will! We are on our way again.

You write...

“Many thanks for your wonderful work. It is great to see such ‘hard science’ backing up what we know in our hearts (and from God’s word) to be his wonderful creation.”

R&BB, Florida

Quotes

“It is the simple truth that man does differ from the brutes in kind and not in degree; and the proof of it is here: that it sounds like a truism to say that the most primitive man drew a picture of a monkey and that it sounds like a joke to say that the most intelligent monkey drew a picture of a man. Something of division and disproportion has appeared; and it is unique. **Art is the signature of man.**”

G. K. Chesterton

“This most beautiful system [The Universe] could only proceed from the dominion of an intelligent and powerful Being.”

Isaac Newton

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